DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 405 992 PS 025 194

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TITLE Fathers and Adolescents: Developmental and Clinical Perspectives. Adolescence and Society Series.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-415-11792-5
PUB DATE 97
NOTE 249p.
AVAILABLE FROM Routledge, Distribution Center, 7625 Empire Drive, Florence, KY 41042 (clothbound: ISBN-0-415-11791-7; paperback: ISBN-0-415-11792-5, $18.95, plus shipping).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescent Development; *Adolescents; Child Abuse; Child Rearing; Child Support; Divorce; Family Environment; Father Attitudes; *Fathers; Females; Incest; Individual Development; *Males; One Parent Family; *Parent Child Relationship; *Parent Role; Psychopathology; Social Change; Stepfamily

ABSTRACT

The family itself and men's roles within traditional nuclear families are changing; non-custodial fathers, stepfathers, and absent fathers are commonplace. This book examines the relationships of fathers to their adolescent sons, and daughters, in the context of a changing society. Chapter one explores both the historical and the changing role of fathers in the development of their children. Chapter 2 explores the role of the father in the separation-individuation process of the adolescent, while chapter 3 deals more specifically with the role fathers play in the attainment of developmental tasks. Chapters 4 and 5 address the distinctive nature of the relationships that fathers share with their maturing sons and daughters. Paternal attitudes toward their male and female children are integrated with broader perceptions of sons and daughters and evident in historical and cultural contexts. Chapter 6 discusses the relationships of custodial and non-custodial fathers with their adolescents, emphasizing the potential risk of a too-close or too-distant father. Chapters 7 addresses the issues of stepfathers and their adolescent stepchildren. The remaining chapters explore relationships under non-optimal conditions. Chapter 8 discusses the conditions of fathers whose adolescents are chronically ill. Chapter 9 focuses on the role of fathers in adolescent psychopathology, while chapter 10 deals with both the aggression of fathers toward their children and the role of fathers in the development of their children's aggressive behavior. Chapter 11 deals more specifically with the dynamics related to father-daughter and father-son incest and the long-standing effects of incest on subsequent development. The concluding chapter discusses the psychological and family-systemic reasons why fathers' parenting behavior continues to be different from that of mothers. Overall the book notes that fathers interact in ways that are different from those of mothers, but that are important for both normal and disturbed adolescent development. Contains a 452-item bibliography. (HTH)